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LIVINGSTONE'S DISCOVERIES.

WHATEVER may be the ultimate result of Dr Livingstone's researches, it is not to be doubted that his name will be for ever associated with the history of the Nile. He is by far the greatest of all modern explorers. He has ventured more, seen more, and thrown a clearer light on the hydrography of Central Africa, than all his predecessors put together. Still, a cloud of doubt hangs suspended over the exit of the waters, among whose innumerable springs he has so long wandered; and it is to clear up, once for all, the mystery of their course, that he voluntarily condemns himself to remain an anchorite in unknown wilds and forests, for we know not how many years. He hopes, indeed, to complete his work in two years; but considering how much his previous stay has been protracted, we may fairly conclude that his return within that period is doubtful. Meanwhile, we observe with regret several marks of a disposition to disparage his labours, by attempting to prove that there exists no connection between the streams he has discovered and the river of Egypt. It would be unjust to say that Captains Speke and Grant discovered nothing, because they made us acquainted with the course and character of the Kitangile, which is certainly one of the feeders of the Nile; but their notion, that the Victoria N'yanza is the source of that river, is as irreconcilable with their own narrative as it is with the science of geography. They saw part of a lake, and heard a great deal about the rest of it; but they neither discovered its dimensions, nor how it is fed, nor how many streams fall into it, nor with what system of lakes it is connected at its southern extremity. All these points are still unknown, and so also is the source of the Kitangile. Nothing, therefore, could be more unfounded than their pretension to have discovered the source of the Nile. It is highly probable that the stream which runs out of the Victoria N'yanza is one branch, and perhaps a principal branch of the Nile; but as they did not follow its course from the lake to its junction with the Blue River, this probability does not amount to

certainty. They have given, we admit, satisfactory reasons why they did not follow the great sweep which the river makes towards the west, and the extent of which is still unknown; and though, proceeding northwards, they came to a river, which they assumed to be the same as that they had left, they may have been mistaken, for, after parting company with it for a hundred miles, they could not be more sure that they were dealing with the same stream, than Dr Livingstone in his assumed identification of the Lualaba with the Bahr-el-Gazal.

We are far from deciding dogmatically that the ridge of uplands, and the peaks that tower from their summit, are the Mountains of the Moon; they are situated about eleven degrees south of what Captain Speke assumes to be the Lunar Mountains of Ptolemy; but instead of contenting himself with transient glimpses of these terrene elevations, Dr Livingstone patiently plodded along six hundred miles of the watershed, examining and describing in noble language his impressions of what he saw by the way. He has not beheld the whole, and does not say he has; on the contrary, he tells us that there remains yet a hundred miles of the watershed, and the most important hundred miles, which he has not visited. The reader who remembers the gorgeous picture which Buffon has drawn of the primitive earth, may imagine himself among its wastes and wilds, as he peruses Dr Livingstone's descriptions of the spongy fountains, the morasses, the shallow lakes, hundreds of miles in length, the impenetrable forests which the traveller skirted, the wild buffalo and elephant tracks, in which the unwary wanderer often sinks to the thigh, where the foot of the huge beast has been, the reedy pools, many miles in length, resembling the mangrove swamps on the coast, the tor-like peaks, impending far up among the hills over runnels and fountains yet unvisited. As we have already said, it is not our intention to be positive where the great traveller himself is not: after all his researches, he observes very modestly that he may be mistaken, and in that case expresses his readiness

to confess his error; but if his own observations, and the testimony of natives whom he knows and trusts, can be relied upon, all the wealth of waters descending from the Lunar Mountains do certainly flow in a northerly direction, whether they ultimately unite with the Egyptian flood or not. The reason he gives for his own belief that it is the great valley in which the united waters flow, sometimes spreading into large lakes, sometimes forming huge lacustrine rivers, is, that the depression is hemmed in by high lands on the west as well as on the east, so that, up to the fourth degree of south latitude at least, he could perceive nothing to lessen his belief in the junction of the Lualaba with the great western arm of the Nile. Still, when his researches northward were interrupted at the fourth degree of south latitude, he had reached an immense sheet of water, which he calls the unknown lake, terminating, as he was assured by the natives, in extensive reedy swamps, which he persuaded himself must in the end join the Bahr-el-Gazal.

Both Captain Grant and Dr Beke have written letters to the *Times*, in which they maintain that Dr Livingstone's theory is impossible. An eminent German botanist, Dr Schweinfurth, has discovered, they say, the source of that river in five degrees north latitude. But are they or the German botanist quite sure that the Bahr-el-Gazal has but one source? May it not, like the Bahr-el-Abiad, have many springs? so that, without disparaging the botanist's testimony, we may believe in the practicability of conducting the waters of the Lualaba into the Bahr-el-Gazal. But here Dr Beke interposes another obstacle, which he considers insurmountable: the river Uelle traverses, he affirms, the line of march which the Lualaba must follow in its attempt to unite its forces with those of the western branch of the Nile. But with all due respect for the science of travellers whether at home or abroad, we have less faith than Dr Beke in the astronomical observations by which the latitude and longitude of new places and heads of rivers are often determined. The Uelle may follow its occidental track in peace, and yet leave room for the north-eastern course of the Lualaba. However, as, from all these conflicting ideas, it is obvious that certainty has not yet been attained, we persuade ourselves that the public will be content to await the result of Dr Livingstone's final researches, which, whether they establish his previous theory or not, he will assuredly divulge to the world in their utmost completeness. For some time, it is well known, the chief of African travellers was supposed to be dead, his journals lost, his discoveries handed over to oblivion. Several languid endeavours were made by the scientific gentlemen of this country to discover his fate, or afford him succour if still alive. But causes on which we decline to dwell frustrated their attempts, and it was left for the correspondent of the *New York Herald* to explore the explorer, and shew to England her bold son displaying the hereditary virtues of his race in the untroubl'd wilds of Central Africa. The name of Mr Stanley, who carried the design of the *New York Herald* into execution, is now almost as well known as that of Livingstone himself, and respected wherever it is known. The meeting of the explorer and his deliverer near the banks of the Tanganyika Lake is characteristic of British coolness and daring. Informed by a servant of the

approach of a white man, Livingstone advanced to meet him, and, at the head of a small caravan, beheld the stars and stripes flaunting in the African breeze. He was therefore not left to conjecture from what quarter his deliverance was approaching. He is not one of those who care on which side of the Atlantic an Englishman is born, or whether he happens to be called an American or a Scotchman; it is enough that he is one of the leading race among mankind, which he feels himself also to be.

The communications of Livingstone himself to the Foreign Office, his letters to the *New York Herald*, and those of Mr Stanley, giving an account of his proceedings in Africa, have made the public familiar with the leading facts of the case; it is not with these, therefore, that we have to deal, but with some important questions, geographical and physiological, arising out of them. Dr Livingstone is a man of warm and grateful feelings—emotional, though not demonstrative; and as he has received numerous benefits from the Africans of the interior, he is naturally disposed to think kindly and judge favourably of them. But kindness is one thing, and science another. Men and women with whom he has for years maintained friendly relations, can hardly appear to him in the same light in which they would be viewed by a new and impartial observer. He tells us himself, that after living for a while among black people, you cease to be conscious that they are black; as by the same metamorphosis of feeling, you cease to be conscious that ugly people are ugly. Men who marry plain women, if they happen to be gifted with a loving disposition, soon forget the want of symmetry in their features, or of proportion in their figure, and, misled by the force of expression, absolutely regard them as beautiful. It seems to us that, under some such influence as this, Dr Livingstone has been betrayed into the entertaining of a far more favourable opinion of the structure and appearance of the Manyema, for example, whom he himself describes as ruthless cannibals, than a physiognomist would consider defensible. Some travellers have said that the negroes pity us because we are white, and possibly also because our heads are not woolly. There is no accounting for tastes; but among the multitudes of black people whom we have seen and known, no example has occurred of an individual who preferred the negro countenance to that of the European. We are consequently disposed to demur to Dr Livingstone's theory of the *physique* of Central Africans, whom he looks upon as superior in many respects to our own countrymen, especially such as have applied themselves to physiological studies.

Six years of familiarity with 'thick luscious lips,' and locks which a poodle might envy, have sometimes led him to view us, descendants of the Vikings and Gauls, from a comic point of view. For instance, in the following passage: 'If a comparison were instituted, and Manyema taken at random, placed opposite, say, the members of the Anthropological Society of London, clad like them in kilts of grass-cloth, I should like to take my place alongside the Manyema, on the principle of preferring the company of my betters—the philosophers would look wofully scraggy.' But though the 'inferior race,' as we compassionately call them, have finely formed heads and often handsome features, they are undoubtedly cannibals. Elsewhere, reasoning in the same vein, he says: 'I happened

to be present when all the head men of the great chief, Insama, who lives west of the south end of the Tanganyika, had come together to make peace with certain Arabs who had burned their chief town, and I am certain one could not see more finely formed intellectual heads in any assembly in London or Paris, and the faces and forms corresponded with the finely shaped heads.' The men being fashioned after this type, we naturally inquire what sort of persons are their helpmates? Are they also finely formed, with intellectual heads and elegantly proportioned bodies? Dr Livingstone replies: 'Many of the women were very pretty, and, like all ladies, would have been much prettier if they had only let themselves alone. Fortunately, the dears could not change their charming black eyes, beautiful foreheads, nicely rounded limbs, well shaped forms, and small hands and feet.' Further on, he adds: 'Cazembé's queen would be esteemed a real beauty, either in London, Paris, or New York.' In a village of Upper Egypt, we saw one black beauty with features as regular as those of a Grecian statue, and hair long and flexible as that of a Greek or Englishwoman. Inquiring whence she came, it appeared that no one could tell—somewhere from the interior, was the reply, but from what part of the interior, it was impossible to learn. She had come huddled among a multitude of captive negroes, whom she regarded with as much scorn as if she had been an Iapetian of the purest blood. Could she have been brought from Manyema? The complexion decided in the negative. They, as Livingstone assures us, are of a rich warm brown colour—she was as black as ebony. Leaving this question unsolved, we follow Dr Livingstone in his speculations on the original type of the negro, which, with Winwood Reade, he is inclined to discover in the ancient Egyptian. Here dogmatism would be peculiarly out of place, since investigation has not yet revealed to us who the ancient Egyptians were. The geographers and philosophers of antiquity were of opinion that Africa commenced west of the Nile, at the line which separates the cultivated country from the Desert. The Egyptians, therefore, in their view, were Asiatics, probably of Semitic origin, and closely allied to the Phoenicians and Carthaginians. To study their monuments carefully, and to behold in them indications of a physiological affinity with the African races, we hold to be impossible. Instead of round, they have almond-shaped eyes, with lips rather thin than thick, slender figures, and long, flexible hair. The nose is not depressed, as Winwood Reade supposes, but straight, like that of the Arabs. Occasionally, mummies have been found with red hair; and from among such individuals, victims were occasionally selected, and sacrificed to Typhon. Their opinions, their rites, their ceremonies, their philosophy, their religion, were almost identical with those of the Phoenicians, and never suggest to a philosophical student the slightest trace of African origin. One of the least explicable problems in the science of ethnology is that repugnance to civilisation, or absolute incapacity to profit by its teaching, which, from the beginning of time, has characterised the black races. As far as we can discover, they have always been cannibals; while the masses of the population have as invariably been slaves, whether at home or abroad. An old Greek poet divided mankind

into three 'classes—one consisting of men who could discover truth for themselves; a second, of men who could not discover it for themselves, but could accept it when it had been discovered by others; and a third, who could neither do the one nor the other—whom, in his rough way of speaking, he called 'wretches, without use or value.' We would not apply this language to the black races, nor perhaps would the old poet, if he were required to deliver his opinion in prose; but the fact is certain, that while the nations of Semitic and Iapetian origin have invented a civilisation for themselves, the Africans have remained from time immemorial unimproved, and apparently unimprovable, at least beyond a certain point. When Dr Livingstone returns to this country, and places his matured views before the world, we are persuaded he will introduce many great modifications into his ethnological theory. No one knows better than he that numerous efforts have been vainly made to diffuse the light of knowledge among the African populations by the Egyptians, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, and Arabs. But the head of the African has proved impenetrable to the darts of enlightenment, whether social, moral, or religious. Nothing can be more completely removed from the ethical system of civilised mankind than the practice of cannibalism, which, nevertheless, appears to be not naturally repugnant to the interior African. The Manyema women, Dr Livingstone says, keep aloof from the hideous banquets of the men; but in the West India Islands, more especially in Hayti, it is the women who take the lead in the practice of cannibalism, which they carry to its most shocking excess, by devouring their own children. How barbarous nations are to be civilised, seems not yet to have been discovered in modern times. Dr Livingstone describes the result of his own researches as the *rediscovery* of facts well known to antiquity; and it would be well for us if we could rediscover the methods by which the Greeks and Romans civilised the races among whom they planted colonies. When modern Europeans settle in the midst of savages, they immediately commence the process of extermination, which they generally complete in a period more or less protracted; and when they fail, it is only when the multitudes with whom they have to deal are vastly too numerous to be cut off. The Red Indians of North America have dwindled from fifteen or sixteen millions to about a million and a half, and will soon disappear altogether. The natives of Newfoundland have long ago retreated to the 'happy hunting-grounds.'

Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.

So, again, in Tasmania, not a trace remains of its once vigorous and numerous population; the black race is fast dying out in Australia, the cannibal in New Zealand, and if we do not extirpate the Hindus and Mohammedans of India, it is because the effort exceeds our strength. Were it not for this phenomenon, we should exceedingly regret that conquest and annexation were not the result of the Abyssinian war. Once firmly planted in those highlands, and opening commercial relations with the Africans of the interior, the probability is that we should have exerted as beneficial an influence on their minds and manners as they are

capable of receiving. When Cazembé—the beauty of whose queen has been above spoken of—had conversed with Dr Livingstone, he said that from the first specimen of the English he had seen, he liked them, and evinced his liking by treating the traveller with much consideration. He might not have liked them so well, had his country become a province of our colonial empire. Commerce, however, quietly insinuates into barbarous populations the good which conquest endeavours to force upon them. The merchant, with a string of blue beads in his hand, is often more potent than a dragoon with his sword. The women befriend the bringer of beads, and the persons whom they befriend are generally able to effect much among savages. Had Abyssinia become the receptacle of all such articles of European manufacture as would be adapted to the tastes of the natives, many of which they have never yet beheld, a peaceable passage would be readily granted through their country to every Englishman. The only races who would have had cause to regret our close vicinity would have been those of the elephant and lion, whom we should certainly have destroyed in a comparatively short space of time. The existence of the lion in any country is an indubitable proof of a low state of civilisation ; he had already disappeared from Greece in mythical times ; in Persia and in the Nedjed, as well as in India, he maintained his ground to our own day ; but he has now become extinct in Asia as well as in Europe ; and had we planted ourselves firmly in Central Africa, as we have long done in the south, lions' skins would have become a scarce article in the markets of the world.

The necessity of our advent among the cannibals of Manyema is clearly shewn by many passages in Dr Livingstone's letters. The natives are not without industry ; they cultivate the soil largely, and have carried the useful arts so far as to be able to smelt iron and copper ; yet they have made but small progress in the affairs of social life. 'There is not a single great chief in all Manyema—no matter what name the different divisions of people bear—Manyema, Balegga, Babire, Bazire, Bakoo—there is no political cohesion, not one king or kingdom. Each head man is independent of every other.' The women play a distinguished part in the business of these countries ; they dive for oysters, and are expert in many other kinds of industry. The principal part of the trade is in their hands. 'Markets are held at stated times, and the women attend them in large numbers, dressed in their best. They are light-coloured, have straight noses, and are finely formed. They are keen traders, and look on the market as a great institution ; to haggle and joke, and laugh and cheat, seem the enjoyments of life. The population, especially west of the river, is prodigiously large. 'Near Lomame, the Bakuss or Bakoons cultivate coffee, and drink it highly scented with vanilla. Food of all kinds is extremely abundant and cheap.' Hereafter, when Dr Livingstone comes to arrange his materials, draw inferences from his own statements, and estimate the value of different facts, he will doubtless be able to paint a consistent picture of the Central Africans, who contrast favourably, as far at least as morals are concerned, with the half-caste Arabs—I mean in Dr Livingstone's opinion. In everything which distinguishes man from man they are as inferior to the real Arab

as the Chinese is to the Englishman. Their superstitions are the lowest and most grovelling prevalent among the human race. The least benighted among them are Manicheans of the rudest stamp, that is, have conceived some idea of a good spirit and a bad one, and point out a hot spring in one of their valleys as coming up directly from the quarters of the latter. Contrast with these notions the grand simple creed of the Muslims—La illah il Ullah—'There is no God but God,' the words in which they express their belief in the unity of the Divine essence. A few years ago, there sprang up a sort of revival among the Arabs of Arabia Proper, who burst into Africa with a comparatively small number of conquering bands, and swept everything before them almost as far south as our settlements ; upon which the English bishop of the Cape observed, that he thought it matter of congratulation that the truths of el Islam were thus substituted for the grovelling fetishism of the blacks. But this movement from the East soon slackened, and has left no other trace than increased appetite for marauding and kidnapping among the inferior races, for Dr Livingstone must admit that the people which invariably succumbs to another people are certainly their inferiors.

A WOMAN'S VENGEANCE.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—AN OLD STORY RETOLD.

In spite of Jack's disclaimer, it was, in fact, chiefly owing to himself that that unlooked-for meeting between Arthur and Jenny had been brought about, although he had been ably seconded by Blanche. She had renewed acquaintance with Alice Renn, after long years of intermission, in one of their river expeditions, and had been surprised to find what a ladylike as well as sensible girl she was. They had known one another as children, when the difference of social rank is not much marked ; but on her later visits to Swansdale, Blanche had naturally seen but little of the inn-keeper's daughter, and what she had heard (although it was nothing but good) had not prepossessed her in her favour. Her pride had resented the notion of there being 'anything between Arthur and a girl in Jenny's position ;' and even when her cousin went abroad, she did not forgive the innocent object of his attachment. Of late, she had been still more prejudiced against her, for it had reached her ears that she had been the principal cause of quarrel between Helen and Arthur. It was true that Jack himself defended Jenny in the matter, but the advocacy of a husband in such cases is not always advantageous for the object of his vindication, and Blanche had come down to Swansdale, Jenny's foe. That the edge of her wrath had been in the first place turned away was owing to Mr Glyddon, of whom she had a high opinion, and whose unstinted praise of the girl awoke in her no suspicion of his own regard for the village beauty ; what was unbecoming in the squire, would have seemed to her absolutely disreputable in the rector, and her respect for the cloth precluded any such idea.

In sober fact, however, Mr Glyddon's encomiums upon Jenny were quite independent of his affection for her. The knowledge of the part she had played with respect to the late Mrs Tyndall—and the silence she continued to keep concerning the latter's behaviour to her, even now when Helen was no

more—filled the rector with admiration; so that on the very point on which Blanche interrogated him—namely, as to the relations between Jenny and Helen—he spoke with such an enthusiasm of the former's conduct as carried conviction with it. Blanche not only acknowledged to herself that she had been wrong in attributing blame to the lock-keeper's daughter, but sought an early opportunity—which Jack was eager enough to offer—to make reparation to her by graciously renewing their old acquaintance; and once brought face to face with one another, the two young women were much too sensible not to acknowledge each other's merits. The surprise, however, at finding her former playmate what she was, was, of course, on the side of Blanche. There was nothing unexpected in the grace and elegance of Mrs Adair, nor, to Jenny, who was of course unacquainted with the failings of fashionable society, even in her naturalness and geniality; but to Blanche the other seemed a marvel. That she was beautiful, and delicately so, was nature's doing; that she was well informed upon subjects not generally within a woman's grasp, as well as upon ordinary topics, was doubtless due to her own diligence; but that one who had passed her girlhood at an inn, and who was now in a hardly less elevating, and even a more humble condition of life, should possess that ease of manner, joined with the most perfect propriety, which distinguished Jenny, was little short of a miracle. The drawback of a parent like old Jacob did not strike Blanche so forcibly, because her own father had been himself what Mr Paul Jones would have termed 'no sweetmeat'; but there was enough, and more than enough, in Jenny's superiority to the circumstances in which she was placed, to excite her warmest admiration.

'Whenever I look upon that girl,' said Blanche, when with her husband and Mr Glyddon, 'I can't help thinking of that line, "And beauty born of murmuring sound shall pass into her face."'

'Perhaps it's the lasher that does it,' observed Jack, to whom the poetic description was a little obscure.

'Nay, it is the lasher,' exclaimed the rector vehemently, carried away for the moment by the recollections evoked by that word, of Jenny's magnanimity and goodness, which did indeed make her fairer in his eyes; 'that is, I mean,' he added, in some confusion, 'the sweet sounds and fair sights which have always surrounded her from her birth, have doubtless had no inconsiderable share in making her what she is.'

'And yet I have known young ladies who live by the river-side,' said Jack, 'at Wapping and Greenwich, for instance'—

'You ought not to have known them, sir,' broke in Blanche, attacking him vigorously with her parasol.

'Strike, but hear!' exclaimed the victim. 'If you will but hear me out, you will see that you have no reason for this violence. I was going to say that in their case I did not remark that "beauty born of murmuring sound" did pass into their face.'

'My husband has no poetry in his soul,' explained Blanche, in apology, to the rector. 'He thinks Alice Renn is just good-looking, and that's all.'

The fact was that sagacious Jack had received his wife's commendations of Jenny's beauty and merits with studied coolness. He had found out his previous mistake in defending her against

Blanche's insinuations, and had now nothing to say for her beyond a few words of tepid praise; but he gave her every opportunity that lay in his power of making her own way into his wife's good graces; and she had completely captivated her. Many an afternoon did the two young women spend with one another, sketch-book in hand, under the lime-tree, and once Blanche had said, though not without some misgiving on the other's account: 'Won't you come back in the boat, Jenny, and dine with us at the *Welcome*?' And Jenny, without a trace of embarrassment, had gladly accepted the invitation. 'I should like it of all things,' said she; 'I have not been in the old place for years.'

It was after that dinner that Blanche had observed to her husband: 'Upon my word, my dear, I no longer wonder at Arthur's old *tendresse* for that charming girl. Whatever may have been her bringing up, she is every inch a lady: if one met her in a London drawing-room, I am much mistaken if one would not pick her out as the most thoroughly self-possessed and well-mannered!—

'My darling, you can't expect me to say that,' interrupted Jack judiciously.

'No; but seriously, dear, don't you think so?'

'She is quite a lady, no doubt, *in mind*, observed the designing one, with just sufficient of detraction in his tone to insure a reply from the Defence.

'Well, but, after all, that is the chief thing,' said Blanche. 'And really, now poor dear Helen is dead and gone, don't you think Arthur might do worse, if he really feels a warm regard for Jenny, and taking into consideration, of course, the dreadful state in which he is in'—

'But think of old Jacob, and the inn, and the lock,' put in Jack.

'Well, of course, all that is bad; but it's a question of life or death almost to Arthur; and if he could be rescued from his solitude and melancholy by such a step, I do honestly think that a marriage with Jenny would be the best thing for him.'

'Perhaps so,' said Jack; 'indeed, my dear, I am pretty sure you are right; but, unfortunately, there is no getting him over to England.'

'That's true,' said Blanche, the matchmaking instincts that belong more or less to every newly married woman, now thoroughly aroused; 'but couldn't we take Jenny abroad with us in the autumn, and throw them together?'

As this was precisely the plan to which Jack had been leading up to from the very first, and the germ of which had caused him to suggest their trip to Swansdale, he began, after true Macchian fashion, to manufacture little obstacles to the idea, for his wife to dispose of, until she was thoroughly set upon carrying it out. In the meantime, however, as we know, circumstances had brought Arthur home, and an opportunity thus offered itself of carrying their scheme at once into operation. It was necessary, indeed, to precipitate proceedings, since, while Uncle Magus lay dead, it would not have been decent to talk of marriage, and now that he was buried, it was Arthur's fixed intention to leave England, probably for ever, in a few hours. But the very urgency of the case put Blanche upon her mettle, and so cunningly did she contrive matters, that Jenny was sitting in the parlour at the *Welcome*—not, indeed, without a

thought of Arthur, for her heart was heavy within her at the news she had heard of his altered looks and proposed exile, but without the faintest expectation of seeing him—when a step that she would have known among a thousand startled her from her sad reflections, and made her true heart bound within her.

‘Arthur!’ cried she, at the sight of him, and a plaintive wail like the note of an *Aeolian* harp, welled from her lips.

‘Jenny!’ whispered he, astonishment and delight overmastering him. ‘Dear Jenny, can this be true?’

The poor fellow had thought himself doomed never to see a happy moment again, and was half afraid that he was dreaming.

The suddenness and marvel of their meeting brought that about at once which it might have taken weeks of consideration and probation to have accomplished. These two did not do much credit to the good cheer of the *Welcome*, but sitting on opposite sides of the little table, feasted on one another with their eyes; they did not speak much, but they had to endure some good-natured raillery from their hostess; for Blanche was in the highest spirits at the success which had crowned her stratagem; and it was easy to see, by the twinkle in Jack’s eyes, that he did not disapprove of her sallies.

‘I suppose we shall not see you again, Cousin Arthur, after to-night?’ said she, without a dimple about her mouth, and with the concentrated gravity of the bench of bishops.

‘Not see me! Why not?’ asked Arthur in astonishment, for he felt a new man: the ideas that he had so seriously entertained a few hours ago, had vanished, or, rather, were exchanged for another set entirely different. ‘Of course you will see us to-morrow.’ (He had even already put himself in the plural.)

‘I thought you meant to go to Liverpool to-morrow,’ said Blanche demurely, ‘and start from thence to some tropical region.’

‘Jack,’ said Arthur appealingly, ‘I throw myself on your protection.’

‘My dear fellow,’ replied Jack, ‘I wish I had it to offer you; but I dare not say my soul is my own.’

They were all happy enough to take pleasure in the simplest mirth; but the most agreeable spectacle which the evening afforded was the matronly patronage which Blanche, a six months’ wife, suddenly began to bestow upon Jenny in her new position; the advice she gave her to the end that she might in future control and subjugate Arthur, and the many wise reflections she let fall concerning the Art and Practice of Married Life. These didactic remarks suffered nothing in their general effect from the retirement of the ladies, for since it was clearly out of the question to separate Arthur from Jenny, and also would have been a little too marked and significant to leave them alone together, the party did not disunite until it was time to break up. Then ‘Would you mind seeing Jenny home, Arthur?’ asked the hostess with mischievous demureness; ‘because, if so, we can easily send somebody from the inn.’ But Arthur did not ‘mind;’ and under the still moonlight, the resolded pair set out along the well-remembered path, and renewed after that long desuetude their olden talk. They stopped at starting beneath the very

tree under which they had parted seven years ago, and kissed again; every field recalled some fond recollection of those bygone days, once more so strangely renovated; and all the way the river sang beside them its old song. Their talk was of the past alone; their very kisses smacked of the halcyon days of youth and of first love. Of the intervening time—of Arthur’s exile and his marriage, and of those last twelve months of widowerhood—not a word was said; but the remembrance of it all was deep within them both, and bore this fruit of purpose, that there was to be no more delay. They had been parted long enough, they had suffered (no matter through whose error) long enough, and such separation and sorrow were to be no more. Arthur pressed for their immediate union; and though Jenny pleaded the nearness of his uncle Magus’ death, as demanding a few months’ postponement of their wedding, six weeks was the longest limit his patience would endure.

It is a beautiful provision of nature that country neighbourhoods are supplied compensatorily with news by rumour, with at least as great rapidity as the electric wire can furnish it to the town; and by breakfast-time next morning it was somehow patent to all Swansdale that the young widower at the Hall was engaged to Jenny Wren. Such advantage, indeed, has the tongue over the telegraph, that some circumstances were even enumerated in connection with the event that were absolutely unknown to the parties themselves. For example, the squire had meant to marry Jenny from the moment of his late wife’s death, and had come down to Swansdale to propose to her, immediately that that year and day had expired which custom has assigned as the period of marital inconsolability: again, the squire had resolved *not* to marry Jenny, and, fearful of her influence over him, had avoided Swansdale until his uncle’s death had compelled his presence there, when he had at once fallen a victim to her, and so fulfilled his own foreboding: again, it was Uncle Magus’ dying words which had brought about this happy issue, for seeing how solitary and wretched Arthur was, he had besought him to wed his first love as a remedy for regret for his second: and again, it was only for Uncle Magus’ death that Arthur had waited even the very moderate time he had, since, while he was alive, he had hesitated to bring that relative’s gray hairs with sorrow to the grave by the commission of such a *mésalliance*.

The second marriage of the young squire of Swansdale afforded, in fact, a topic of conversation for the whole interval between the first rumour of it and the ceremony itself, not only to Swansdale, but to the entire country-side. ‘The county’ disapproved, of course—there is no crime, except, perhaps, rick-burning, which ‘the county’ does disapprove of so much as of a *mésalliance*—but it was intensely interested, nevertheless. Ancient justices of the peace, who had not had oar in hand for twenty years, took to boating again, in order that they might have an excuse for visiting Swansdale Lock, and seeing the new toast of the Thames—in which, however, they were doomed to disappointment, for the Adairs had taken Jenny back with them to town, whither Arthur had followed her. Blanche would have fought the battle for her with ‘the county’ tooth and nail, but ‘the county’ was not to be fought. If such and such were Mrs Adair’s views upon the matter, it begged to differ from

them ; that was all *it* had to say—with the exception of the expression of its thanks to Providence that it did so differ. In its own drawing-rooms, and in its own particular circles, convention had not two opinions on this discreditable affair. In them Arthur Tyndall was charged with many a high crime and misdemeanour, such as 'setting open flood-gates,' 'destroying social barriers,' 'flying in the face of public opinion,' and was finally pronounced to have 'lost the respect of all persons whose respect was worth having,' and to have 'done for himself irretrievably.'

Blissfully unconscious of having committed these atrocities, or audaciously defiant of the punishment that had entailed upon him, Arthur continued to prosecute his addresses with ardour, for which every opportunity was afforded him. Perhaps the opposition that had been offered to her own engagement made her more favourable than it otherwise would have been, but certainly never had love-match a stancher advocate than was found in Blanche Adair. She even undertook the colossal task of reconciling her mother to the mésalliance, though, it must be owned, not with great success. Good and wise as Mrs Ralph Tyndall was, she had her own traditions, and clung to them.

'Arthur was old enough,' she allowed, however, 'to know his own mind, and she had no intention of remonstrating with him ; and as for Alice Renn, she herself had always liked her, though it was true she had never contemplated her as a family connection.'

This was not very promising, but Blanche was content with it, because her mother expressed herself willing to see Jenny ; and to see her, as her new friend believed, was to be conquered by her. And indeed this came about, though not quite in the manner that Blanche had anticipated. Jenny did not 'lay herself out' to conciliate Mrs Ralph quite so much as was expected of her : she shewed gratitude and respect, but made no solicitation of patronage. Moreover, on certain matters of private judgment—small enough of themselves, but things on which women are prone to be impatient of contradiction, and especially by their juniors—she held her own, modestly, but resolutely, against Mrs Ralph, and thereby won her heart.

'I must allow that your friend Jenny has both principle and character,' was that lady's frank admission ; and having thus gained a place in her respect, Jenny was not long in securing one in her affections. But the most remarkable feat that this young woman accomplished was the winning over of Mrs Somers, in whom, as was to be expected, she found at first her most strenuous adversary. She had even refused to meet Jenny, and when she did come across her, by sheer accident, under Mrs Tyndall's roof, had behaved to her with great scorn and cruelty. It was only natural that she should have regarded with disfavour the girl who had so soon been chosen the successor of her dead daughter, but she had no right to treat her (as I am afraid she called her) as 'the dirt under her feet.' The manners of excellent Mrs Somers, in fact, so far from having the repose that stamps the caste of Vere de Vere on that occasion, were so coarse and violent as to shock all beholders ; and Jenny, who was certainly neither deficient in courage nor self-respect, had uttered no word of rejoinder. Her beautiful face had grown somewhat

paler, and her lip had trembled a little, but not with rage ; her eyes had not emitted one spark of indignation against her antagonist, for whom, indeed, she felt nothing but pity ; and she never told Arthur one word of what had happened.

The fruit of this was borne some days afterwards in a letter of apology from Mrs Somers herself : 'I ought to have known better, Miss Alice,' it said. 'You are not to blame for loving Arthur, and my conduct was shameful, I scarcely know what I did say, for my blood was up (thinking of my poor dead darling), but I daresay it was very bad. Since Blanche tells me you behaved like an angel, I conclude, indeed, that I must have behaved like the other thing. She says that she is sure, however, that you will forgive me. One thing, pray, believe, that if I was in a passion, I didn't give myself airs. As to your being an innkeeper's daughter (of which they make so much), I think nothing of that ; my own husband, though no publican, dealt in hops himself, which is something like it . . . May you be happy, young woman, and make Arthur so, is my earnest wish.' As to the rest of London society, it was of small consequence to Jenny whether she pleased or not, yet, for Arthur's sake, she strove to please, and succeeded. The town often welcomes what the country rejects, and *vice versa* ; to the former, freshness, beauty, originality, are always welcome ; and even when it was whispered that Miss Alice Renn had emerged from a lock on the Thames, it only gave a piquancy to her charms, and earned for her the title of the Thames Lily and the Freshwater Aphrodite.

On many accounts, indeed, Arthur would have preferred his marriage to have occurred in London ; but there would have seemed a cowardice in such a proceeding, from which he shrank ashamed, and in due time it accordingly took place at Swansdale.

Mrs Ralph and the Adairs came down to it, but very few of the neighbouring families were present, and, what was thought a still worse sign, Mr Glyndon did not perform the ceremony. Only one or two persons were aware of the real reason which prevented his doing so, and his absence was absurdly enough set down to his disapproval of the event on social grounds. Popular as both bride and bridegroom had severally been in the village, their marriage was not regarded with favour : even there, Jenny's elevation was quite as much resented by those of her own class as by her superiors, while the sentiment of Hamlet was indulged in with respect to the haste with which her bridal had followed the funeral of her predecessor. The frown of 'the county' she had borne with great philosophy, for the County had never smiled upon her ; but this disapproval of her old friends touched her nearly ; nor did she derive any satisfaction from the line of defence which old Jacob always adopted for her (but especially after the amontillado), that 'as for his daughter Jenny, she might have looked a deal higher, had she chosen, and married a lord' (from Eton) 'years ago.'

However, these little drawbacks were as nothing in comparison with the bliss she felt in Arthur's love ; and never did a happier or a more lovely bride reply 'I Will' to the parson's 'Wilt thou?' than Jenny Wren on the day she wedded Arthur Tyndall. The compensation had come to her at last for those long years of Patience and

Disappointment, and surely, surely there was no disaster in Fate's store, save death itself, that could shadow those bright days to be !

CHAPTER XXXIV.--TOO MUCH HAPPINESS.

Arthur had left it to Jenny to select the spot in which they should pass their honeymoon, promising only (for fear, perhaps, that she might have hit upon the Lakes, where one does not, as a rule, spend honeymoons two years running) that it should be somewhere abroad ; and she had chosen Brussels. It was curious to see how astonished, nay, petrified with alarm, he had looked when she made that choice.

'Good Heavens ! Why Brussels, Jenny ?'

'For no reason, dearest Arthur, save that which my own vanity suggested : I knew you had been ill and wretched there, alone, and I flattered myself that you would now feel differently, and perhaps ascribe the change to me.'

Of course, this explanation was eminently satisfactory ; and as Jenny added that she was but an ignoramus, to whom everything on the continent would have the charm of novelty, Arthur proposed Italy. So to Florence, Rome, and Naples they journeyed, and a very happy time it was to both of them. To Jenny it was a new world of beauty, for she had never seen any other landscapes save those homely English river ones (which, after all, however, have no rivals), made up of wood and water and hanging banks ; while the wonders of art were almost as new to her. She enjoyed the immense advantage of seeing these last with a companion who critically knew nothing about them ; who did not rave about this, that, and the other, until she was afraid to have an opinion of her own, nor chatter the art shibboleth in her ears till the beauties faded out of the canvas. She did not say much herself, but what she did say contrasted very vividly with those second-hand notes of admiration he had heard other young ladies utter in similar circumstances, and gave him even a higher opinion of her good sense and taste than he had entertained before ; only, with one other, he always loyally forbore to put her in comparison, and of her, Jenny, on her part, never spoke. She would have liked to have spoken of her ; and certainly would have taken care to do so only with tenderness and respect ; but it was not for her to break the silence which Arthur so rigidly maintained upon that subject. He never once mentioned Helen's name, or in the most distant manner alluded to her, and this Jenny put down to an over-sensitiveness with respect to herself : he had once discarded her for Helen, and perhaps he imagined that this was a source of bitterness to her ; and she would have liked to have had the opportunity of telling him that this was no longer so ; that she had never wondered, even when she felt most forlorn, that a beautiful and accomplished young woman, such as Helen, who had evidently also loved him tenderly, should, after so long an absence, have erased the memory of her own girlish charms, and that now, at all events, every feeling of humiliation was forgotten in the great happiness he had bestowed upon her.

Jenny was intensely happy ; and Arthur, too, seemed to have become quite another man. She was often asked, by chance companions of her own sex, how it was that her husband looked so old

and yet so young ; so gray and careworn in the face, and yet so eye-bright and conspicuously happy.

'It was through an illness that he had at Brussels,' was her reply to all such questions ; but about that illness she knew little more than they ; nothing, in fact, save what Blanche had told her ; for Arthur had never opened his lips concerning it, and her delicate instinct warned her that there was some reason for his silence ; perhaps the time he spent there had been too immediately connected with Helen's death to permit allusion to it. Notwithstanding the dogma that husbands should have no secrets from their wives, complete confidence is hardly to be expected by the young woman who weds a widower ; and Jenny was much too sensible to be exacting. She was a perfect Griselda, indeed, in this respect, and the very antipodes of Helen : some people may say that that only became her, considering the position from which her lord and master had raised her ; and certainly, in a sense, it did become her ; but if such concession be the usual consequence of marrying beneath one, men would surely never be so foolish as to wed in their own sphere. Moreover, as to money, although it is true Helen had been an heiress, Jenny, for her part, thanks to old Jacob's frugality, was by no means portionless, and, indeed, had brought quite as much to Arthur as he possessed himself. As one example among many in the difference between her and her predecessor with respect to the possession of 'a will of their own,' we may instance this : that when, after a few weeks of unclouded sunshine, both within and without, Arthur hinted at their return to Swansdale, Jenny at once acceded to it. The idea could scarcely have been very welcome to her. Abroad, she had been everywhere admired and caressed ; while, at home, she had only to expect—at all events, until time should wear away the prejudice of her neighbours—cold looks, cold shoulders, and unjust suspicions. Still, Swansdale was to be her home, and above all, Arthur's home ; and she did not ask for a day's delay. It would have seemed to her as unjustifiable to do so, as for a public schoolboy, whose vacation is over, to demand another week of holiday without any reasonable excuse—such as an increase of the royal family.

The Tyndalls, therefore, returned to Swansdale. It was fortunate that the difference of their reception, as compared with that which they had accorded Arthur and his first wife, did not, of course, strike Jenny. No bells were rung ; no escort met them at the station ; no triumphal arch was raised for them to pass beneath it. The school, however, had assembled at the gates, as on the last occasion, but of their own accord, and out of love for their old teacher, and gave Jenny a welcome that brought happy tears into her eyes. The servants, too, now not so numerous as of yore, lined the hall as they entered, to do honour to their new mistress ; but Mrs Glyn's manner was even stiffer than her silk gown. She could not forget that long ago, as it was, there had been a time when Miss Alice Renn had been content to take a cup of tea with her in the housekeeper's room, and had not dreamed of aspiring to the drawing-room ; while the butler was filled with dread imaginings of the day when he should have to 'demean himself' by waiting on old Jacob at his son-in-law's table, and helping him to sherry.

'There'll be deuced little left of our fine West

India Brown,' was his dark foreboding, 'if that old Lushington gets the run of our cellar.'

This apprehension, however, was, as it turned out, quite groundless; for, in the first place, West India Brown was an article always stigmatised by the admirer of Amontillado as 'treachery stuff'; and, in the second, Jacob Renn was much too 'independent' after his own fashion, 'to come anywhere where he might not be welcome; though (mind you!), for the matter of that, he had been in company in his time with the best in the land, and knew how to behave himself (thank Heaven!), whether it was to a dook or a dustman. If his gal wanted to see her old father, she might come down as often as she pleased to the lock, and, for the matter of that, the squire with her—why not?—and take a dish of tea.' And this judicious compromise was, in fact, effected. Matters generally settled down much better than might have been expected; and every day saw the waves of opposition growing smoother and smoother, for, in quiet, conciliating Mrs Tyndall, they had nothing to break against. Her only real trouble, in short, was, that the rector could not be persuaded to visit at the Hall: it was painful enough to him, poor fellow, to have to look upon her and Arthur in their pew on Sunday, from the too commanding elevation of his pulpit. But, during their absence, he had done them the good turn to thoroughly disabuse the mind of 'the county' as to the reason for his holding aloof from them. Some feeble female, at a dinner-party, had ventured to congratulate Mr Glyndon upon the stand he had made against 'unequal matches'—meaning the tacit opposition he was supposed to have afforded to Jenny's marriage, by deputing its solemnisation to another—and his reply had astonished the company not a little.

'Whoever had married Miss Alice Renn,' said he—'and I speak of all men without exception, with whom I have ever been acquainted—must needs, in so doing, have made an unequal match, for none are worthy of her.'

'Well, upon my word!' ejaculated the feeble female. 'You do astonish me.'

'Nevertheless, madam,' returned the rector, 'I assure you, upon my word of honour, that what I have said is true.'

These words, which circulated from dinner-table to dinner-table, were by no means without their influence, for Mr Glyndon was known not to be one to 'say things' with a mere view to astonish, and the effect was seen in many 'a call' at Swansdale Hall, which, though it may have had curiosity for its motive, in the first instance, bore good social fruit: those who came as critics returned again and again in a much more kindly spirit; and one or two of the more sagacious even confessed to themselves that, so far from being what they had expected to find her, the second Mrs Tyndall was 'perfectly charming.' At all events, they professed themselves to be Jenny's friends, and though she did not need them for herself, for she was one of those women who are never idle, or find time heavy on their hands for want of such companionship, she welcomed them gladly for her husband's sake. It was a satisfaction to her to think, not that he need no longer be ashamed of his wife as one 'sent to Coventry' by her neighbours (for that she knew he could never be), but that other people could no longer

attribute to him such a feeling. Nay, Jenny Wren was but a woman after all (though none the less charming for that restriction), and it doubtless gratified her, when she went out to dine with her great neighbours, to know that she came beyond (or perhaps disappointed) their expectations of her. It had been supposed, at first, that she would have a difficulty in restraining her knife from visiting her mouth, and in extending her conversation beyond the topic of the coal-traffic on the Thames; and yet not six months had elapsed before this 'young person' had advanced to such social preferment, that Lady Trottermout, the member's wife, had graciously pronounced her 'quite an acquisition!'

All this, however, was but a very small item in the great sum of Jenny's happiness. Every day seemed to draw her husband nearer to her heart, and her to his; while supremely content as she felt in her present lot, the future had now in store for her even a still greater bliss—the gift of offspring.

'Oh, my darling,' whispered she to Arthur, when she first told him of it, 'I feel so very, very happy that it gives me fear. The day of my life seems almost too bright to keep its blue.'

'Nay,' returned he, with tenderness, 'this is only the compensation which is owed you for long years of patient sorrow and (alas) ill treatment; you will be happier and happier every day, believe me, till the time comes—and may it be long distant, is my selfish prayer—for you to become an angel; so happy, that the change at last from earth to heaven will not be noticeable; nay, it seems to me that it will be no change at all, darling, since in my eyes you are an angel already.'

It was very pleasant to her to hear him use such loving hyperboles, and still more pleasant to see him so hopeful and happy, who, but six months before, had seemed to have neither hope nor happiness within him, for to what could that change be owing save to their mutual love! He was going out to shoot that day over a neighbour's preserves; and while left alone at home, she repeated over and over again to herself those tender words, and called up the bright look with which they had been accompanied, to gild his absence. It was a dull November day, with occasional showers of sleet, and, as she was not likely to be troubled with visitors, she resolved to give it up to 'setting things to rights' in her little boudoir. This room was full of knick-knacks, which (such things not being much in her line) she had never thoroughly investigated and explored, though, to some women, it would have been a great delight to do so. Her predecessor, for example, 'dotted' on inlaid cabinets, old china, and Indian rarities in ivory and sandal-wood, and had surrounded herself with them in her bower. The knowledge that they had been Helen's, might perhaps have given Jenny even less of interest in them than she would have otherwise felt; but if so, she was unaware of any such feeling; it was with no other sensation than that of a somewhat feeble curiosity that she proceeded to examine these treasures.

A Japanese cabinet, as being the most considerable object in the room, first engaged her attention. It was in construction simple enough, and, indeed, almost the fac-simile of that in Arthur's smoking-room, except that where his books stood there were here pigeon-holes, and that what were

pigeon-holes in his cabinet were here little painted drawers, each with a tag of silver by which to pull them out. Both articles of furniture served the purposes of a desk, and the late Mrs Tyndall had habitually made use of this one for her somewhat dainty letter-writing. House-keeping and accounts she had left entirely to Mrs Glyn, but what correspondence she had carried on with old school-friends, breathing eternal attachment, or with her more recent acquaintances in the neighbourhood—‘requesting the favour of, &c. &c.’ or ‘accepting with pleasure, &c. &c.’ had been transacted here, with little people in ebony and silver disporting themselves on every drawer above her, and expressing, by inappropriate acrobatic action, their sympathy with the difficulties of composition. Jenny was not aware of this, and it gave her a momentary feeling of discomfort, upon opening the desk, to find the blotting-book lying before her just as it had been left there two years ago—with *Helen Tyndall* in reverse imprinted on it—probably from the last note which her predecessor had ever penned. With that exception, everything wore the appearance of having been looked to and set in order much more recently. Every scrap of note-paper, for instance, which had borne the dead woman’s monogram had been carefully removed, and it was with the assurance that she would come upon no private record likely to give pain to herself or others that Jenny continued her investigations. Great was her surprise, then, to find in the first long drawer—the one most likely to be opened by any one who used the desk, and the one most certain not to be passed over by the person, who ever it was, that had set the cabinet in order—a large envelope with this address: *To be opened by the first person who shall chance to find it after my death.* (Signed) *Helen Tyndall.*

ACROSS THE WALNUTS AND THE WINE.

In after-dinner talk
Across the walnuts and the wine.—TENNYSON.

THERE is not in this early September a soul in London, or rather there are some twenty-nine hundred thousand souls not worth the mentioning. Everybody who is anybody is being plundered of his luggage on the continent, or bitten by the *Heteroptera* by the sea-side. Bond Street is a desert; Piccadilly, a waste. My own Mau-soleum Club is looking more awfully melancholy than I have ever beheld it. There are newspapers in its bow-window—not in the hands of Growler and Moper, who are wont to occupy it for five hours every afternoon—but stuck upon the panes, between them and the gilded shutters, which are closed. A scaffolding is erected about the stately place, and men are laying on it those hypothetical two coats of paint required in leases. I say hypothetical, for it is surely an open question whether *two* ever are laid on. In the gorgeous drawing-room—by far the most depressing apartment (with the sole exception of ‘the pinioning-room’ in Newgate)—gilding and decorating are going on. (*Three* coats of paint in the drawing-room, or the paper will rot.) I venture up the steps, and am resolutely met, not by my own proud porter, who knows and loves me, but by the Foreman of the Works, who wishes to know what is my business. I retire in indignation, and without a word, and I see him looking up and down the street for a policeman.

How dare he look for such a thing, knowing in his secret heart all about those coats of paint? He dares, because he knows that the policeman is out of town with his family, exulting in shrimps and periwinkles at Southend.

There is no guard at St James’s Palace, for every available soldier is gone to join the autumn manœuvres.

The crossing-sweeper in Pall Mall has been away these three weeks at Highwater-super-Mare, where, clutching an airy broom, he surveys the mud with a hopeless look. If I went into the Park, and took a chair, it is my belief that for once no eagle-eyed proprietor would swoop down upon me with a demand for payment for it.

Why was I in London? it may be asked. Well, courteous reader, being honorary secretary of the *Pall Mall Aid to the Destitute Society*, and all the paid officials having left town under various pretences, I thought it my duty to return to my unremunerated post. Duty is sweet; but when one has done it, one seems to want a change. It is like rising from the dinner-table immediately after strawberry-jam tart: nature demands a glass of Curacao or something. Of course, there was no chance of finding a friend in town; far less that friend of friends, Housewife, whom, indeed, I knew to be with his child and consort in Devonshire. I had not been under his roof for months. That hateful ‘Claimant’ had, I confess, in some measure kept me from it (Housewife and the Colonel had of late become unbearable upon the subject of his wrongs or rights, though dear Mrs Housewife kept a Griselda-like silence, which all who knew her knew how to translate), and, besides, our dear old host had been out of town for weeks. I sauntered up the well-remembered street, and looked at the closed house with its brown holland blinds, and blank dead face, with wistful eyes. ‘What is “home” after all,’ thought I, ‘about which we make such a sentimental fuss, without its tenants?’ How utterly wretched that forsaken mansion looked in which I had passed so many delightful hours. Where was all that jovial company now? Where were their gibes, their gambols, their songs? (for Funnidog could sing a little, only we wouldn’t let him)—where were the flashes of merriment that were wont to set that table in a roar? Well, I knew pretty well where they all were—that is, my fellow-guests. Parson Grey was in Rome (he had written to me to say that he had seen *The Mysteries of the Inquisition* acted in the Holy City, to delighted audiences, just as we should have lit it at the old ‘Vic.’—think of that!). Bitter Aloes had given out he was gone to Norway—in reality, I knew him to be at Margate, for he had been seen there, reviling the Home Secretary for not permitting him to dance after eleven o’clock at the Hall-by-the-Sea. Macpherson was on his native heath—or, at least, on a moor which he had purchased the right to call his own till he had exterminated the last grouse upon it. Scale Hill was doubtless enjoying himself by this time after his own fashion in some desolate Alpine solitude, with the skin peeled off his face, snow-blind, and nearly cut into two parts by being roped with a too stout companion. Colonel Thunderbomb was at Berlin, playing ‘the game of war’ with his old companion in arms, Count Schlobberchintz, with a porcelain pipe in his mouth. Professor Puzzleton was picnicking about

the country with the British Association. Funnidog was gone to the Great Buffalo Hunt on the Prairies of Nebraska, the advertisement of which in the newspapers had so immensely tickled him. He had purchased a ninety guinea ticket, and expected to be well repaid for his investment, even if the arrangements for the provision of 'tents, saddle-horses, and wagons' should fall a little short of their brilliant promise. As to meeting a buffalo face to face, that was far from being Funnidog's intention; he would have fled from a loose cow in a field at home; but he calculated that the people he should meet with on that most astounding expedition, whether it ever got so far as the 'favourite feeding-grounds [of that dangerous animal] on the plains of Colorado' or not, would afford him material for six months of humorous conversation, and forward his prospects (as a professional diner-out) beyond all measure.

I had myself seen him depart from the shores of England with an enormous gun-case. 'We provide our own rifles and ammunition,' he had explained, 'likewise liquors and cigars. Everything else is provided by the Company.'

'But have you got a rifle and ammunition, Funnidog?'

'Certainly not,' he had calmly replied. 'I have filled the case up with the other two articles and a quarto note-book. Only imagine, my dear fellow, the fun that I shall get out of five hundred individuals, who have never, perhaps, shot at a partridge, going out to kill buffaloes on the prairies of what's-his-name!'

If it had been the fashion for ladies to have joined that Nebraska expedition, Miss Flitter would, without doubt, have done so; but as it was, it could be predicted with certainty that she was at present at Scarborough, would be next month at Brighton, and, unless she could get an invitation to some very good country quarters indeed, would be back in town at the end of November. For my part, I wished she was back now. Even Miss Flitter would have been somebody to talk to (or, at least, to listen to, for her tongue is unceasing) in that utter loneliness of London. Our value as companions to our fellow-creatures varies with our exigencies. In the heart of the Tyrol, the sight of Jones is hailed with rapture, whereas in Pall Mall, during the season, we affect not to see him.

Upon the present occasion, it suddenly struck me that I should dearly like to look upon the face of Housewife's butler: it was a rather massive one, it is true—massive, I must confess without suggesting grandeur; but it would at least be familiar, and so far welcome. In that peopled solitude, where I yearned in vain for companionship, even recognition would be something. Besides, he would tell me when the family might be expected home. Stepping across the street, therefore, I rang the bell, which, as *Hadj Baba in England* has it, 'by a curious but effective mechanical contrivance,' produced, not indeed the butler—how could I have expected it? he was at Herne Bay with his wife and family—but the page-boy. Now, Housewife's page, like most of his class, has a large mouth, and is always grinning. So, when I asked, 'When he expected his master to return to town, I was not surprised to see him go into an ecstasy. Imagine, however, my astonishment when he spluttered out: 'Why, bless you, sir, he's

at home now!' At the same moment, out rushed my hospitable friend from the back dining-room, and welcomed me with a tumultuous enthusiasm. 'The *idea* of your being in town at this time!' exclaimed he. 'The *idea* of *your* being in town!' echoed I. 'Why, where's Mrs Housewife, and my godson, the Phenomenon?'

'Oh, they're in Devonshire,' said he. 'They're enjoying themselves exceedingly. But' (and here he exhibited some traces of confusion) 'I was obliged to come up to town, to see about a trouble-some Charity, of which I am the honorary sec.'

'Stop!' cried I warmly; 'don't say *that*, Housewife. Say *anything* but that. That's *my* excuse. I thought of it first; I am sure I did. I got away from my two maiden aunts on the Essex coast on Friday—it was insupportable.'

'It *couldn't* have been worse than Devonshire,' answered Housewife. 'Bed and board are there synonymous: I never slept on anything *like* their beds; and so very, very short too. The child, of course, did not mind that, and when he is pleased, Mrs H. is content. But at my time of life, I really must have my rest.'

'My dear Housewife,' said I, 'we two can afford to tell the truth—that is, to *one another*. After a week of it, the sea-side is a mistake. My aunts have taken the house for "a month certain"—that means, we may stay even longer. I have expectations from them both, and cannot leave them—except in the sacred cause of Charity. Pity me!'

'Pity me,' rejoined Housewife. 'We three are at a grand hotel, where everything is nasty, but nothing cheap. We dine daily in a splendid saloon upon thirteen infamous courses. After dinner, the nigger minstrels play in the private grounds of the place we have exchanged for home. I really could not stand it any longer.'

'How long ago did you escape?'

'I have been here a week. The affairs of the—ahem—the *Society for Righting the Oppressed* are in a tangled state, and require continuous supervision. I also take a great deal of sleep. I wanted it. How did you sleep in Essex?'

'Don't ask me!' said I, with a shudder. 'The hours of the night were apportioned as the poet of our Watering-places has described:

One of sleeping,
Two of scratching,
Six of hunting,
None of catching.'

'And how did you dine?' asked he.

'I never did dine. We had "meat-tea." My aunts preferred it.'

A tear of sympathy trembled in my old friend's eye. 'You shall dine to-day,' said he with earnest tenderness. 'And we did so.'

Alone together in that peopled solitude, but over a most excellent repast, we discussed the question of the Autumn Exodus. Why should two eminently respectable members of society have been driven to deception, in order to escape for a while the horrors of the great Annual Holiday? Why should society demand this periodical sacrifice of sleep and comfort of every one of us, under the specious names of Relaxation, Renovation, Rest? I don't want it. Housewife doesn't want it. No man of mature age and average sense does want it. To one like myself, of moderate income, a month's residence at the sea-side means the

exchange of a decent house for mean and paltry lodgings ; of good food for bad ; of spring-beds for feather-beds (suffocating in July and August), or else for mattresses stuffed with turnips, and adapted for a shorter race of mankind ; and all this costing at least double what I should have spent had I staid at home. For Housewife, who is a rich man, this lunatic desire for 'change' had only signified extortionate hotel charges, vulgar company, and a shabby pretence of luxury, which, to one who is accustomed to real comfort, would be ridiculous if it were not irritating. Heaven forbid that any human creature should be docked of one day of his holidays who needs them, or who finds they do him good ! Let the children have their month at the sea-side, and gain that sun-burn which their mothers imagine to be health ; let the ladies also go, if it so please them, although I will do them the justice to say, that many of them would prefer to cut that dreadful 'outing' shorter, had not tyrant Fashion decreed its minimum to be that 'month certain.' But surely, surely, Paterfamilias, who does not want sun-burn, and cares for fashion as little as fashion cares for him, need not endure these seaside pleasures for the entire limit of his family's stay ! May he not 'run down' occasionally to 'see the chicks,' and then back again to his own home, to recruit himself with food and rest ? Or how would it be if he sent the family on ahead of him, and came down for the last fortnight ? That would make an 'incident' for the rest, who themselves are getting a little bored by that time, and be a priceless boon to the bread-winner himself.

If the month of change were distributed over various portions of the year, say, at Easter, mid-summer, and Christmas, neither Housewife nor I would have had a word to say against it ; but this whole month of vegetation in a neighbourhood that is 'used up' in a few days at furthest, is too much for active minds and delicate stomachs.

'Everybody else is striking,' cried I as we parted, well warmed with the most excellent claret ; 'why should not the Paterfamilias of England strike against more than a fortnight of compulsory service at the sea-side, with short beds and short commons !'

'An excellent idea,' exclaimed Housewife, as he clasped my hand in farewell ; 'and I'll get it ventilated in our newspaper.'

'Your newspaper, my dear fellow ; what's that ?'

'Well, it's the *Anti-oppression Journal*, you know,' answered he with some hesitation ; 'just the organ to take up a thing of this kind.'

'But I never heard of the paper.'

'Well, that's its second name, you see, my dear fellow. Don't let us quarrel about names, or revive the embers of ancient controversy.'

Here I wished Housewife 'good-night' with some perturbation ; for what could he mean, with his 'names' and 'embers' ? That he was exceedingly intoxicated, was clear, and I did not wish to humiliate him, by witnessing his condition. The effect of starvation in Devonshire was already manifesting itself in repletion in Mayfair.

Going down to join my aunts at their meat-tea in Essex, however, on the following day, a newsboy placed in my hand a periodical with the following title, *The Tichborne News, or the Anti-oppression Journal*, 'a weekly newspaper advocating fair-play for every man.'

So the secret was out at last. Consumed by the Tichborne Fever, my unhappy friend had come up

to town : his charitable mission of Righting the Oppressed had that irrepressible Claimant for its object ; and all those most sensible observations of his regarding the Autumn Exodus had been the merest moonshine.

WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY.

IN THIRTY-FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER XX.

Ebbing men indeed
Most often do so near the bottom run,
By their own fear, or sloth.

'It's all right,' said John, coming into the banker's private room, looking pale, but yet determined—'all right, master.'

'What's all right ?' cried the banker.

'Why, the ship—the ship's all right, the *Arthur's Bride*.'

'What ! has she got to Liverpool ?'

'No ; she's got to the bottom of the sea. I told you I'd manage it for you, Mr Rowlands, *bach*.'

'And the young Englishman ?'

'He's all right too !'

'Where is he, then ? Is he coming here ?'

'He'll never come here again : he's drowned, master !'

'O my God !' shrieked the old man, 'you have done murder among you, and the guilt of it will lie on my soul for ever !'

'Indeed, they couldn't help his being drowned, Mr Rowlands, *bach*.—But now, come ; let's think what we're going to do. It's no use calling one another names about it. What we did we did for you, master. It isn't my bank that we've saved. And now, we want the money, Mr Rowlands—the thousand pounds we were to have for wrecking the ship.'

'John, you're a villain ! You've destroyed all the peace of my soul ; I'm ruined now and for ever ! How can I ever look an honest man in the face ?'

'Listen, master : it was as I said ; the women began to come down from the hills this morning ; they had got the notes in their hands that you bamboozled their men into keeping yesterday. You wouldn't have bamboozled *them*. Your ha'pence wouldn't have passed muster for guineas with them, Mr Rowlands, *bach*. But what did I do ? I took old Gwen Morris by the hand—she's the noisiest and the bitterest old woman of them all—and I said to her : "Look here, Gwen Morris ; here's a telegram we've had from the government to say that our ship's lost ; dear, won't Mr Rowlands be grieved ? He'll see nobody to-day, Gwen, you may be sure." "Humph !" was all she said. "He'll see me, John, *bach* !" "It was ten thousand pounds he had insured upon her," I went on, "and he'd give all that to get her back again !" "Diaoul !" cried the old woman, "he'll be richer than ever now, the old crow !" And with that she stumped away to the market-place, and told everybody the news ; and then all the old women scamped back to the hills again with their notes in their pockets. What do you think of that, Mr Rowlands, now, eh ?'

'See who that is,' gasped the banker, as he heard the swing-door open, and the heavy tread of men outside.

John disappeared, and presently came back again, and ushered in Captain Ellis and the mate of the *Arthur's Bride*.

'Well, Mr Rowlands,' cried Captain Ellis, 'we've come back, you see, according to orders.'

'I didn't give you any orders,' cried the banker.

'Oh, we've kept you all right, Mr Rowlands,' said Ellis: 'we didn't think of coming to see you till it was all blown over; but my mate here being about to go to foreign parts'—

'Yes, we want you to pay, governor,' cried Brumfit; 'that's the long and short of it—*arian llawr*, as you call it in your confounded lingo.'

'Hish, my lad! don't speak so rude to the banker!'

'Banker or sailor, what do I care! We're all pals together. *We've* gone through all the danger of it; *he'll* get the best part of the profit. Promise to pay, does very well for a banker, but it won't do for a sailor. Down with the gold, that's our ticket; eh! old chap?'

'John,' said the banker, getting up, shaking all over, 'I don't feel very well, and I should like to go home. I'll see your friends by-and-by—wait and see, wait and see. John, give me your arm: I think I should like to get home.'

'No, you don't!' cried Brumfit, putting himself before the door. 'It's no use feeling queer; everybody feels queer when they've got to pay—that's no use. You pass the word to the clerk: Measure out the gold, John! Then you shall go home to your feather-beds and bolsters.'

'Stand aside, man!' cried John; 'don't you see the master's ill? The money is right enough; I'll take care it's paid.—Look here, men; it's no use your hanging about the bank—it don't look well. Come up to Bodgadfan to-night at twelve o'clock, and you shall be paid all your shares. I'll bring the gold up in a bag with my own hands.—Won't I, master?'

'Anything—anything, John—only let me get away home.'

'Indeed,' said John, when he had gone, 'he's like a hare that's running home to die. But the money's all right, comrades: you shall have it at Bodgadfan at twelve o'clock to-night.'

'And look here,' cried Brumfit: 'it's about time we square up that other matter—the ship's books—eh, mate?'

'Yes, indeed,' said the captain; 'let us see where we stand, eh!'

'All right,' said John. 'After we've seen Mr Rowlands, and got the money for sinking the ship, we'll all go to the *tybychan*, the little summer-house, and share what she earned when she was afloat. Indeed, I'm sorry to think she was lost like that!'

'She was about done for,' said Brumfit; 'she'd never have earned us much more. I shall take my share, and ship for the Cape, and see what I can do among them diamonds.—What say you, Capen Ellis?'

'Well, I think I shall buy a bit of land, and build a house, and settle down ashore.'

'Aren't you afraid the ghost of the old ship will come against you?'

'No, indeed; there's no spirit in wood. She was a very good ship, but she's sunk; she'll never come against me any more.'

'Suppose the young chap came to light, the young Englishman, as could speak to your leaving the ship and him in it, locked up in the cabin! when the ship was sound and tight, and might have weathered the point with a bit of seamanship—eh, what then, Capen Ellis?'

'Pooh! he's dead; he died on the island; no fear of him.'

'Did you see the body?'

'Weren't you with me? Didn't the old woman want the money to bury him?'

'Ay, well, if I'd a been you, I'd a spent five bob to make sure he was gone: it might a been somebody else, you know; besides, there's the seamen, as might chatter.'

'Never fear; they know nothing about the young Englishman; and if they did, I didn't put him in the cabin; that was your doing.'

'As if I should have done it without your knowing about it! What! you want to throw everything on to me, do you, you darned sneak! What you wanted to meddle with the young chap at all for, I can't see. Suppose he did break the bank, what then?—we're all safe enough.'

'All the same, I mean to keep the bank afloat a little longer, and the young Englishman being out of the way is a great benefit to me,' said John; 'not that I'd have done anything to him myself.'

'O yes; get somebody else to do the dirty work, and you bag the plunder; I know your ways, Master Jack; but you just shell out fair-to-night, or else you'll smell the bottom of Caerlinion Bay. Do you hear, Master Jack?'

CHAPTER XXI.

When you looked sadly, it was for want of money.

When the banker reached his home, he found the house full of visitors. A party of girls and young men had driven over from Llanfechan to luncheon, and stopped to eat early tea. The old man turned away with a sick heart from the rattle of the piano, and the discordant laughter of youths and maidens, and hurried off to his own study, a room which overlooked the estuary, and was seldom used.

There was no fire there, and everything was dark and cheerless: the better to harmonise with his sad thoughts. These took no wide range. He felt only a dull and constant pain, a thickening of his pulse, a plucking at the bottom of his throat, a ceaseless stupor of the brain. He half hoped that something would give way, that a cord might snap, that he might be released from the weary weight of life.

Ah, if he had but a right hand now, a friend to counsel him, a son to back him!

That he should have been so deceived in John, the faithful clerk! And yet, when he came to think of it, John had been very queer lately. Ever since he had refused to give those five shillings a week extra that John wanted, he had been queer. Why couldn't Arthur help him? Ah, he was a good boy, and enjoyed his shooting and his love-making, and wrote a neat hand, and didn't make many false steps; but for any help he would be to his father—no! He would lose his head entirely if he knew one-half of the present emergencies! No, there was no help for him. Either he must submit to be preyed upon by these vampires, these rogues who were coming to him this very midnight—or he must shut up the bank, and take his chance. Yes, it was all very well; men could live through a good deal, but he had already lived through so much. And yet must he live on still? No, he couldn't go down to the grave with the fate of that young man hanging upon him like a stone; he must live to repent, to make atonement. But how?

He opened the window, and went out into the garden. It was a dim gray night, and sea, and sky, and mountain were alike undistinguishable in the general gloom; but down below in the river, where a tug just arrived had cast anchor in the stream, the light at her mast-head cast a long rippling gleam on the dark waters. The tide below lapped against the rocks; there was a faint murmur from the surf on the bar; a dog barked; a horse in the stables snorted uneasily and clanked his chain; a bell on shipboard rang out sonorously over the waters; and now there was to be heard the soft beat of oars and the click of the rowlocks.

'Some one coming ashore from the ship,' said Rowlands to himself, and he turned back into his cold, cheerless room, and shut the window. Then he sat down again in his cushioned chair, and groaned heavily: he was wearied out, but he must sit up till midnight to keep his fatal tryst.

Winny Rowlands had not failed to notice that her father was suffering. She had attributed, indeed, his depression to ill health; had tried to persuade him to leave home, to have change and rest. But the suggestion had made her father so angry that she had given up the hope of persuading him. She had tried to entice him away from his work, laid plans of excursions to be taken, of visits to be paid; but the old man was inflexible. He wouldn't leave his bank for a moment; he would sit there even after the bank had closed, wearily turning over papers, of which, nevertheless, he didn't seem able to grasp the contents.

It was sad to Winny to see her father perplexed and troubled, and she had gone to bed in great misery and distress. She knew that something was wrong; she felt that she was living in an atmosphere of doubt and uncertainty, that her father had some heavy misfortune impending over him: but he would not give her his confidence.

'Oh, there was nothing,' he said. 'It was a busy time this—making up the books, and so on. The work was too heavy for him; he'd have to get a partner. He should be all right in a day or two.'

The sympathy Winny felt for her father prevented her being satisfied with these excuses. She was so troubled and sad herself, that she knew some calamity impended. As she sat in her own room, over the fire, that night, and thought of other Christmas nights and of days long past, she recollects how, long ago, when she was a little child, there had been a similar trouble; and it was at this time of the year too; for she remembered that there was a tremendous fall of snow, and that all the roads were blocked up; and that her father, whose gold was all gone, and who was waiting for more from London, had stood on the bank steps all day long, in the storm and cold, for two livelong days. And she remembered how, standing there on the steps, he would let nobody come into the bank, but sent all away from the door, crying to each, as he came up: 'To-morrow, to-morrow; come again to-morrow!' How he had held the steps of the bank against all comers for all those weary hours; and how, at last, post-chaises had come in, cuttings having been made through the snow—post-chaises, with six horses each, and laden with boxes of gold. What rejoicing there was too! How the bells rang, and the people cheered! It was on Christmas eve that the succour had arrived; for she well remembered the night before, when, sadly troubled at her

father's perplexity, after being put to bed, she had got up, and stolen away, unperceived, to the summer-house on the rock, where, all unknown to anybody, she had kept a hoard of treasures—a broken gold ring, a string of gold beads, a green button she believed to be an emerald, a cut glass bottle of fabulous value—how she had brought back all these treasures, sadly frightened at her outgoing and incoming; and had carried them to her father in his study, and told him that he might sell them, or do what he liked with them, if he could keep open the bank on the proceeds.

All this, and the rest of her past life, she thought over very sorrowfully, slowly undressing. Her new dresses were all laid out—her blue silk, for her brother's wedding; the sweet bonnet, all laces and feathers; all the tags and fopperies of young maidenhood—but these things could give her now no pleasure. The old days of their family life, of the time when she had yet a mother to comfort and counsel her, when her father was a cheerful companion, her brother alike a torment and delight—the thought of these old days, and the contrast with the suspense and anxiety of the present, brought the tears to her eyes, as she put out her candle, and crept slowly to bed. The tears brimmed over on to her pillow, and then she thought of her visit to her treasure in the old summer-house. Ah, if she could only do something for her father now! Sinking gradually into sleep, her last thought was of the old summer-house and her hidden treasure.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

PROFESSOR ZÖLLNER, in his book *On the Nature of Comets*, accounts for some of the phenomena by shewing that water, mercury, and many other substances, even in the solid state, always give off vapour; hence, a mass of matter in space will ultimately surround itself with its own vapour, and present the appearance of a comet. It is quite probable that some of the masses moving in space may be fluid, in which case, on approaching the sun, the development of vapour would be very rapid, as is well exemplified by some of the smaller comets. And as regards the swift growth of the tail, Professor Zöllner demonstrates that if the free electricity of the sun be not greater in amount than that observed at the surface of the earth, it would be sufficient to communicate an impulse which, as exemplified by the comet of 1680, would produce a train or tail sixty million miles long in two days. Having proved this mathematically, he does not think it necessary to seek farther for a theory of repulsive force by which to account for the tails of comets.

The professor is engaged also in the discussion of an important question—the Origin of the Earth's Magnetism, and the Magnetic Relations of the Heavenly Bodies. It has been observed that magnetic disturbances occur at places far distant from each other and from the disturbing centre. For example, in 1861 a severe earthquake was felt in Greece; at the same moment, Dr Lamont, in his observatory at Munich, noticed an unusual restlessness, with jerks and oscillations of the magnets, which continued half an hour. Some years ago, an English observer was watching a sun-spot; suddenly he saw a bright light burst from its

centre, and glow for five minutes. He discovered a few days later, that, in the observatory at Kew, the magnets had all at once started from their position, and were greatly disturbed for a time corresponding to that of the manifestation of the white light on the sun. These are noteworthy evidences of forces acting at a distance, and they bear out Professor Zöllner's theory, that 'the sun is to be regarded as a magnetic body like the earth.' The earth in its annual course round the sun cuts a plane perpendicular to the ecliptic twice a year; and on September 6, the south pole of the sun is turned towards the earth, and on March 7, the north pole. Hence, whatever magnetic effects are produced on the earth by the sun, will have their maximum at these two dates.

Physical astronomers are generally agreed that the moon has no atmosphere; but Professor Challis of Cambridge once fancied that he saw evidence of an atmosphere at the bottom of a lunar valley; and now another observer suggests that the appearances seen at new moon are also evidences of atmosphere. We see the bright crescent, and dimly the disk of the moon made visible by earthshine; and at the same time the edge which is farthest from the bright crescent shews itself slightly illuminated. This faint illumination it is which is regarded as affording proof that the moon *has* an atmosphere.

The same observer offers an explanation of the reason why the moon appears larger when low than when high. On a fine night, he says, the vault of heaven never appears like half a globe, but is very much flattened overhead; and the effect of the atmosphere is to make the stars in the zenith seem nearer to us than the stars in the horizon. This may be easily verified by a diagram. Draw a half-circle, and within that a flattened vault. Then draw disks on the outer line to represent the moon, and lines from these to an observer's eyes in the centre, and at once it will be seen why the lowest moon appears to be the largest.

An ingenious method of stopping leaks in iron ships when at sea, has been patented by Mr McCool, who effects his object by means of what he calls 'safety-plates.' These plates are, as artisans say, 'dished'—that is, they resemble a dish in shape; consequently, when the hollow side is pressed against the plates of a ship, the 'safety-plate' fits close, and will keep water out when held firmly in place with screws. By a clever contrivance, when once the leak is discovered, means can at once be taken for fitting on the new plate. A weighted line is dropped through the hole; this is laid hold of by lines drawn under the ship; the weight is taken off and replaced by a screw bolt; a plate, with india-rubber covering the inner edges, is next screwed to the bolt, is dropped overboard, and drawn into position by the line hanging through the leak; an inner plate is then screwed to the inner end of the bolt; and thus the leak is completely covered on the inside and on the outside, and the water is kept out. That this means of safety can be made use of in the open sea, and under different circumstances, without the necessity of docking the ship, is not the least among its recommendations.

Signor Zuccato, an Italian, has devised an electro-chemical method of copying writings, diagrams, or designs, which, while affording another instance of

practical application of science, can hardly fail of general recognition. A description of the method is printed in the *Journal of the Photographic Society*. A steel plate is covered with a coat of varnish, and on this, when dry, the writing or design is scratched or written with a steel point. Should a fac-simile be required, this can be produced on the varnished plate by the process known to photographers, and then scratched, as in the former instance.

The copying is effected in an ordinary copying-press, to which, above and below, wires from an electric battery are connected. Moist sheets of copying-paper, impregnated with prussiate of potash, are laid on the steel plate, and placed in the press. Immediately that the press is screwed close, the electric current begins to pass, and prints on all the sheets of paper, in from thirty to sixty seconds, whatever is scratched on the plate. The operation may be repeated as often as is desired; whereby copies can be multiplied to any extent, which in many cases would be highly advantageous. We hear that this new electro-chemical copying-press is soon to be offered for sale by an enterprising firm in London.

Paper-hangings for walls are known to everybody. It is now proposed to use hangings made of metal; and an account of this new invention, which comes to us from Paris, has been read before the Society of Arts. The metal employed is tinfoil, in sheets about sixteen feet long, and from thirty to forty inches wide. The sheets are painted, and dried at a high temperature, and are then decorated with many different patterns, such as foliage, flowers, geometrical figures, imitations of wood, or landscapes. When decorated, the sheets are varnished, and again dried, and are then ready for sale. Tinfoil is in itself naturally tough, and the coats laid upon it in preparing it for the market increase the toughness. The hanging of these metallic sheets is similar to paper-hanging, except that the wall is varnished with a weak kind of varnish, and the sheet applied thereto. Thus in this way a room or a house may be newly painted, without any smell of paint to annoy or harm the inmates. Moreover, the tinfoil keeps out damp; and as the varnish is a damp-resister, the protection to the room is twofold. Experience has shewn also that cornices, mouldings, and irregular surfaces may be covered with the tinfoil as readily as a flat surface; hence, there is no part of a dwelling-house or public building which may not be decorated with these new sheets; and, as regards style and finish, all who saw the specimens exhibited at the reading of the paper, were made aware that the highest artistic effects could be achieved at pleasure.

The decoration of small tin plates for ornamental purposes has, we hear, been introduced into Cornwall—the county of tin. In this case, the colour and pattern are printed on the plates by means of lithographic stones and rollers; but, to insure excellence and permanence, the plates must be heated. Difficulty was at first experienced in keeping the plates at the required temperature, the upper part of the oven being always hotter than the lower; but it was overcome by fitting into the oven a vertical roundabout, which carried the plates from top to bottom of the oven, during the whole process of heating. We think there are many purposes to which these plates could be applied beyond that of mere ornament.

An account of an experiment interesting to arboriculturists has been published in Luxemburg. As some travellers will remember, the roads near that city are planted with trees—ash, maple, and elm, alternately with poplars. The space between the trees was six metres (about seven and a half yards), and it was thought that the poplars, growing fast and tall, injured the other trees, and some hundreds were cut down. The elms, ash, and maples had then twelve metres in which to grow, and they profited thereby, for their annual growth increased from nine to eleven per cent. As the observations necessary to establish this result were carried on from 1859 to 1871, they may be accepted as trustworthy, and are, indeed, such as might have been expected.

Professor Lapham, of the United States' Telegraph Service, has drawn up a Report on the great forest-fires of last year, some of which penetrated even into the states of New York and Pennsylvania, and he shews that the great prairies of the Far West have been produced and are extended by these fires, aided by the operations of nature. In those regions, the autumn months are exceedingly dry, with prevalence of south-west winds. 'These conditions of climate,' says the professor, 'have existed for ages, and hence the normal condition of the great western plains is that of prairie; and so long as these causes exist, this region must always remain in this condition, unless changed by ingenious and persistently applied devices of art.' At present, a constant struggle goes on where prairie and forest meet; and generally it is the forest which gives way, and border towns and villages also, and the prairie grows bigger. A system of give and take may be said to prevail; in a wet autumn, the forest holds its own, perhaps encroaches a little on the prairie; but in a dry season, the fires assert their supremacy, and as they kill the roots of everything except prairie-grass, the extension of prairie-land naturally follows. But, as Professor Lapham says, the prairie-soil is as well suited for the growth of trees as the forest-land is; and if some united and enforced endeavour were made, millions of acres might be covered with grateful shade, the extreme dryness of the atmosphere would be mitigated, and the well-founded apprehensions that now prevail as regards a scarcity of timber would be effectually removed.

The *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society* contains interesting papers on the diamond fields of South Africa, which should be read by the enterprising folk who desire to have trustworthy scientific information about that now attractive country. One of the explorers states that the diamond gravel is not of local origin, that it has been brought from long distances, and by some other agency than that of water. He considers that the greater part came from the Drakensberg mountain range and its northern offshoots, and he thus sums up his views: 'The vast unstratified deposits, the promiscuous piling together and intermingling of boulders, the remarkable polish of many of them, the terrace-like mounds and accumulations, all evince physical conditions far different from those at present in operation; while the entire absence of all recent fossils in these gravels almost forces on us the conviction, that they must have been laid down under circumstances inimical to animal and vegetable life; and these circumstances, judging from similar deposits in other

countries, have been brought about by the action of ice.'

Another scrap of geological news appears to confirm Mr Darwin's supposition that Brazil, and indeed the whole continent of South America, is slowly rising. The group of islets known as Fernando Noronha is one hundred and ninety-four miles from Cape St Roque, the most easterly point of the southern continent. The channel between the islets and the main is shallow when compared with the deep water on each side thereof; and, as there are signs of elevation on the islets, the inference is, that, with the gradual upheaval, they will some day be connected with the cape by a long neck of rocky land. Those idle people who complain that the age of wonders is past may lay this fact to heart.

People who look at the death-lists in newspapers can hardly have failed to notice of late years an increasing frequency of announcements of sudden death. Some explanation of this fact has been published by the Registrar-general and the medical journals, which shews that heart-disease has much to do with the increased mortality under the head above referred to. But it may be asked: Whence comes the heart-disease? The answer is: From the stress and strain under which people now try to get a living, every one striving to be first, and to win more fame or more money than his competitors. It seems as if human beings in their daily transactions were trying to rival the express train and the telegraph; and as a rule, it is among men between twenty and forty-five years of age, and not among women, that the deaths from heart-disease occur. In 1851, the number of deaths was 5746; in 1870, it was 12,428, or more than double. Truly, the Scriptural precept, 'Make not haste to be rich,' has more than a moral significance; and, as a medical contemporary remarks, the foregoing figures 'warn us to take a little more care not to kill ourselves for the sake of living.'

A PICTURE.

THROUGH heather, moss, and golden rod,
We wandered in the summer weather,
And heeding scarce the way we trod,
Were glad, because we were together.
And when the noonday sun was high,
A purple rock gave shelter cool,
Where, hidden from the summer sky,
And flecked with shadows, lay a pool.
It seemed a jewel, bright yet dim:
Wet ferns half strove to cover it;
Enticed by thyme, about the brim
The wild bees murmured over it.
'And this the wishing well,' she cried,
'Where they who drink a boon may crave;'
And kneeling there, the spell she tried;
And though she smiled, her eyes were grave.
Small hands together lightly pressed
From the cool spring she lifted up,
And half in earnest, half in jest,
She offered me the rosy cup.
And in the pool her shadow came,
A picture ne'er to be forgot!
Sweet eyes and falling hair, in frame
Of foxglove and forget-me-not.